

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This is in response to the Office Action of April 24, 2006. That Office Action was made final. Applicants have submitted herewith a Request for Continued Examination. The remarks and amendments are responsive to that Office Action.

Applicants have amended claims 1, 5 and 9 to indicate that a bioabsorbable coating is placed on both the first and second contact surfaces as a lubricating coating, providing reduced device drag.

In the previously mentioned office action, claims 1-3, 5-7 and 9-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,275,601 to Gogolewski et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,984,927 to Westrom, Jr. et al.

The rejection of Claims 1-3, 5-7, 9-12 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,275,601 to Gogolewski et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,984,927 to Westrom, Jr. et al. is respectfully traversed.

The references cited by the Examiner neither disclose nor suggest Applicants' claimed invention having a bioabsorbable lubricating coating on both contact surfaces of a bioabsorbable medical device, thereby providing reduced device drag. The Examiner has provided no combination of references which discloses or suggests Applicants' novel devices. The Examiner has pointed out no teaching or reference that discusses the desirability of combining the cited references. Indeed, none of the references cited by the Examiner recognize the problem of device drag in absorbable medical devices, and, none of these references either alone or in combination suggest a solution to this problem. There are numerous advantages to a patient in having a bioabsorbable device implanted versus having a nonabsorbable implant. Applicants' novel devices overcome certain disadvantages relating to device drag, allowing bioabsorbable implants to be used in procedures that were conventionally done with nonabsorbable implants.

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This provides a major advantage to the patient and facilitates the implantation of these devices by the surgeon.

None of the references, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest a medical device having contact surfaces coated with a lubricating bioabsorbable coating to reduce device drag. The combination of the references, even if the Examiner pointed out a teaching discussing the desirability of such a combination, would not produce Applicants' claimed invention.

Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

Therefore, in view of the arguments and discussion hereinabove, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw his rejections, make the amendments to the claims of record, and allow the claims.

Respectfully submitted,
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